

Message Text

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S/S-MR.SEBASTIAN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 296386

NODIS

FOR WISNER

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 296386 ACTION SECSTATE 06 DEC 76

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 296386

NODIS

FOR THE AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, RH, ZA

SUBJECT: RHODESIA CONFERENCE: MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT
KAUNDA

1. PLEASE PASS FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT KAUNDA FROM
THE SECRETARY.

2. DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

-- I READ WITH CONSIDERABLE INTEREST AMBASSADOR
REINHARDT'S REPORT OF HIS MEETING WITH YOU OF A WEEK AGO.
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I ALWAYS ADMIRE YOUR CANDOR AND OPENNESS, AND I GREATLY
VALUE YOUR VIEWS. YOU HAVE GIVEN GENEROUSLY OF YOUR TIME
IN RECEIVING MY EMISSARIES.

-- I MUST TELL YOU VERY FRANKLY THAT I WAS DISTURBED BY THE IMPLICATION OF YOUR REMARKS TO REINHARDT WITH REGARD TO THE TWO-TIER ARRANGEMENT FOR THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. AS YOU WILL RECALL, NOT ONLY DID I DISCUSS THIS CONCEPT WITH YOU DURING MY FIRST MEETINGS WITH YOU IN SEPTEMBER, BUT THERE WERE FOUR PRECEDING MISSIONS, AMERICAN AND BRITISH, WHICH HAD ALREADY DISCUSSED WITH YOU THE BASIC STRUCTURE OF THE PROPOSED INTERIM GOVERNMENT. WHILE THERE MAY HAVE BEEN SOME QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE COMPOSITION OF THE INTERIM

GOVERNMENT, ESPECIALLY OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE, THE CONCEPT OF A SHARING OF POWER ON THE BASIS OF A TWO-TIER SYSTEM WAS NEVER CHALLENGED. IN ADDITION, I WANT TO STRESS THAT AT NO TIME WAS THERE ANY SUGGESTION THAT THERE SHOULD BE AN IMMEDIATE TRANSFER OF POWER TO MAJORITY RULE. THIS HAD NEVER BEEN A CONSIDERATION IN OUR DISCUSSIONS, AND IT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN BECAUSE IT IS NOT WORKABLE OR ACCEPTABLE.

-- IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER WHAT THE EXERCISE WE ARE ENGAGED IN AT GENEVA IS ALL ABOUT. WE ARE IN GENEVA TO TRY TO REACH A SETTLEMENT THAT TRANSFERS POWER IN RHODESIA FROM THE HANDS OF WHITES WHO NOW HOLD IT TO AFRICANS WHO RIGHTFULLY DESERVE IT.

-- WE ARE IN GENEVA TO GET A SOLUTION THAT OFFERS THE BEST ASSURANCE OF A SMOOTH TRANSITION TO A MODERATE AND RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT, ONE THAT CAN BRING STABILITY AND PROSPERITY TO ZIMBABWE, AND ONE THAT WOULD NOT POSE A THREAT TO THE STABILITY OF ITS NEIGHBORS, MOST NOTABLY ZAMBIA.

-- WE ARE DISTURBED BY WHAT WE PERCEIVE TO BE A GROWING SENSE OF UNREALITY IN GENEVA, NOT ONLY AMONG SOME OF THE NATIONALIST DELEGATIONS, BUT ALSO AMONG THE OBSERVERS.

-- SOMEHOW, THERE APPEARS AN INCREASING TENDENCY TO
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IGNORE SOME OF THE FUNDAMENTAL REALITIES OF THE RHODESIAN SITUATION:

-- THE FIRST OF THESE REALITIES IS THAT IAN SMITH AND THE RHODESIA FRONT HOLD DE FACTO POWER IN RHODESIA, NOT THE SOUTH AFRICANS, NOT THE BRITISH, AND CERTAINLY NOT THE UNITED STATES. NO MATTER HOW MUCH WE MAY DISLIKE THAT SITUATION, IT IS NOT SOMETHING THAT CAN BE WISHED AWAY.

-- THE SECOND, THERE ARE LIMITATIONS ON THE DEGREE OF INFLUENCE THAT EXTERNAL POWERS CAN EFFECTIVELY EXERCISE, ESPECIALLY FOR A SETTLEMENT THAT DOES NOT INSURE MINORITY RIGHTS.

-- THE THIRD POINT CONCERNS THOSE UNDERSTANDINGS WHICH PERSUADED SMITH TO ACCEPT, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS 12 YEARS IN POWER, THE PRINCIPLE OF MAJORITY RULE AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THAT PRINCIPLE WITHIN A FIXED TIME FRAME. WHATEVER ONE CHOOSES TO SAY ABOUT THE FIVE POINTS OF SMITH'S SEPT. 24 SPEECH, AND PARTICULARLY POINT 3, THERE CAN BE NO DISAGREEMENT OVER THE FACT THAT THEY WERE UNDERSTOOD TO FORM THE BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS. THEY CAN BE ALTERED IN THE COURSE OF A NEGOTIATION BUT THEY CAN NOT SIMPLY BE DISCARDED IN TOTO. NOR CAN THERE BE ANY ARGUMENT OVER THE FACT THAT THE CONCEPT THAT UNDERLIES THE FIVE POINTS AND THAT MADE POSSIBLE SMITH'S ACCEPTANCE OF THEM -- AS WELL AS THAT OF HIS PARTY -- IS THE CONCEPT THAT RHODESIAN WHITES WOULD BE ASSURED OF A MEANINGFUL VOICE AND ROLE IN THE POLITICAL DECISIONS IN THE TRANSITION PERIOD THAT WILL AFFECT THEIR FUTURE IN ZIMBABWE. MOREOVER, THE FIVE POINTS IN CONCEPT WERE DISCUSSED REPEATEDLY WITH THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS BEFORE THEY WERE PUT FORWARD.

-- WE HAVE HEARD THE VIEW EXPRESSED BY SEVERAL PERSONS IN GENEVA THAT SMITH AND THE RHODESIA FRONT MAY NOW BE READY TO ABANDON THE CONCEPT OF SHARED POWER IN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT IN EXCHANGE FOR VAGUE AND AMBIGUOUS PROMISES OR UNDERSTANDINGS. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD IT SAID THAT THE UNITED STATES CAN DELIVER SMITH UPON DEMAND AND GET HIM TO ACCEPT ANY ALTERNATIVE SET OF PROPOSALS THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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MIGHT BE PUT FORWARD AT THE CONFERENCE. WITH REGARD TO THE FIRST POINT, NOTHING SMITH HAS SAID OR IMPLIED SINCE THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE OFFERS ANY SUGGESTION THAT HE IS PREPARED TO ABANDON THE CONCEPT THAT RHODESIA WHITES MUST HAVE EFFECTIVE AND CLEARLY DEFINED POWERS WITHIN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. WITH REGARD TO THE SECOND, ANYONE WHO THINKS THAT WE CAN PERSUADE OR COERCE SMITH INTO ACCEPTING A SETTLEMENT ON TERMS THAT DO NOT EVEN TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE FIVE POINTS FAILS TO UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION.

-- OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT SMITH AND THE RHODESIANS ARE FULLY PREPARED TO FIGHT ON AND TO RESIST ALL FORMS OF PRESSURE IF THEY DO NOT GET THE KIND OF SETTLEMENT THAT THEY FEEL MEETS THEIR MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS. WE ARE ESPECIALLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE VERY EVIDENT EROSION OF SUPPORT IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR A SETTLEMENT, WHICH COULD TIE VORSTER'S HANDS AND PREVENT HIM FROM CONTINUING HIS POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS NOT ONLY WITH RESPECT TO ZIMBABWE BUT ALSO NAMIBIA.

-- IF THERE IS NO SETTLEMENT, IT IS NOT THE UNITED STATES

THAT WILL SUFFER MOST DIRECTLY FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF THAT FAILURE. THOSE WHO WILL SUFFER MOST WILL BE THE ZIMBABWEANS, WHO FACE THE PROSPECT OF HAVING A WHOLE GENERATION OF YOUTH CHEWED UP IN NEEDLESS BLOODSHED, AND WHOSE ONLY REWARD WILL BE A COUNTRY RAVAGED BY WAR AND DESTRUCTION.

-- ZAMBIA WOULD PAY A HEAVY PRICE IF THE WAR IS ALLOWED TO DRAG ON, AND NOT MERELY IN ECONOMIC TERMS. ZAMBIA ALREADY KNOWS WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE FOREIGN ARMIES LIVING IN ARMED CAMPS ON ITS SOIL AND HOW DIFFICULT IT CAN BE TO CONTROL THEM. THE LEBANESE EXPERIENCE STANDS AS AN EXAMPLE TO ALL OF HOW DISRUPTIVE A FORCE THESE ARMIES CAN BECOME.

-- YOU MUST ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT IF CONTINUING VIOLENCE LEADS TO FOREIGN INTERVENTION, THE UNITED STATES CANNOT CONFIDENTIAL

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IGNORE IT.

-- WE CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERN OF ZIPA AND YOUR DESIRE NOT TO PROVIDE THOSE WHO WISH TO SEE THE CONFERENCE FAIL WITH THE EXCUSE THEY ARE LOOKING FOR. BUT WE FAIL TO COMPREHEND HOW ZAMBIA'S INTERESTS, OR ZIMBABWE'S EITHER, WOULD BE SERVED BY A SOLUTION THAT MERELY PLACES POWER IN THE HANDS OF THE MILITANTS WITHOUT IMPOSING ANY DISCIPLINE OR RESTRAINT ON THE EXERCISE OF THAT POWER.

-- NOR DO WE UNDERSTAND THE ARGUMENT FOR GIVING IN TO ZIPA'S DEMAND FOR INSTANT MAJORITY RULE, WHICH SEEMS TO US TO BE CONTRARY TO ZAMBIA'S OWN INTERESTS, AND WHICH WILL ALSO DESTROY ANY CHANCE OF GETTING A SETTLEMENT.

-- TRANSITION MEANS JUST THAT, NOT AN INSTANTANEOUS AND TOTAL REVERSAL OF EXISTING POWER RELATIONSHIPS BUT AN IRREVERSIBLE MOVEMENT TOWARDS IT IN A LIMITED SPAN OF TIME. OBVIOUSLY SMITH WILL HAVE MORE POWER AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TRANSITION THAN AT THE END.

-- THE UNITED STATES IS COMMITTED TO A SOLUTION THAT RESULTS IN THE EFFECTIVE TRANSFER TO THE AFRICAN MAJORITY BY THE END OF THAT ALREADY AGREED INTERIM PERIOD. FOR A SOLUTION TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO US, IT MUST ALSO BE A SOLUTION THAT CAN BE SUPPORTED BY THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS AND SOLD TO THE OAU. IN OTHER WORDS, ZIMBABWE'S VICTORY IS ASSURED, AND ANY TALK ABOUT A SECOND UDI IS BASELESS AND ABSURD. WE WILL OPPOSE ANY SUCH MOVE SHARPLY AND CAN COUNT ON SOUTH AFRICAN SUPPORT IN THIS REGARD.

-- HOWEVER FLAWED THE INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS OUT-

LINED IN THE FIVE POINTS MAY APPEAR, WE MUST REMEMBER THAT THEY WERE THE BASIS ON WHICH SMITH WAS HOOKED INTO THE PROCESS OF SURRENDERING HIS OWN POSITION AND POWER.

-- THE NAME OF THE GAME IS TO KEEP HIM HOOKED AND NOT MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO WIGGLE OFF.

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-- THERE IS A LOT THE BRITISH CAN DO TO MAKE THE STRUCTURE OF THE INTERIM; GOVERNMENT FUNCTION MORE SMOOTHLY AND EFFECTIVELY. WE BELIEVE THEY ARE PREPARED TO PLAY A ROLE, AND WE ARE PREPARED TO PUSH THEM IN THAT DIRECTION. BUT WE CANNOT EXPECT THE BRITISH TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITIES IN RHODESIA THAT THEY HAVE NEVER HAD AND FOR WHICH THEY LACK THE AUTHORITY TO BACK THEM UP. THEY ARE WILLING TO BRIDGE THE GAP, BUT YOU MUST BE VERY PRECISE AND VERY REALISTIC ABOUT WHAT YOU EXPECT OF THEM. THEY CAN PROVIDE THE ADDITIONAL MARGIN OF ASSURANCE FOR BOTH SIDES; BUT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, THE BRITISH ROLE CANNOT TAKE THE PLACE OF A BASIC AGREEMENT AMONG THE PARTIES THEMSELVES WHICH DEFINES IN CLEAR AND UNAMBIGUOUS TERMS THE POWERS THAT EACH WILL EXERCISE IN THE INTERIN PERIOD.

-- THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF OUR COMMON EFFORT TO FIND A SETTLEMENT, NO NATION HAS HAD CLEARER VISION THAN ZAMBIA. NO NATION HAS A GREATER STAKE IN A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME, ONE THAT BRINGS A MODERATE, PRAGMATIC AND RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT TO ZIMBABWE. WE BELIEVE THAT OTHER NATIONS WILL RECOGNIZE AND ACCEPT THE FACT THAT ZAMBIA FACES GREATER RISKS THAN ANYONE ELSE IF OUR EFFORTS FAIL; AND AS A RESULT, WE BELIEVE THAT YOUR WORD WILL BE NEEDED AND ACCEPTED BY THE OTHER FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS AND BY AFRICAN LEADERS GENERALLY. IT IS UP TO ZAMBIA, BEING CLOSEST TO THE PROBLEM, TO REMIND THE OTHERS OF HOW DANGEROUS THE SITUATION CAN BECOME IF A SETTLEMENT BASED ON COMPROMISE IS NOT ACHIEVED.

-- IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT RETHINK ITS POSITION AND NEGOTIATE PROPOSALS WHICH PROVIDE FOR POWER SHARING WITH RHODESIAN EUROPEANS DURING THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION.

-- THE FRAMEWORK WHICH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT APPEARS TO BE ADVANCING DOES NOT MEET THIS CRITERIA AND CANNOT, THEREFORE, ENJOY OUR SUPPORT.

-- I APOLOGIZE FOR THE LENGTH OF THIS LETTER BUT I CONSIDER IT IMPORTANT AT THIS DELICATE PHASE OF THE
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NEGOTIATIONS THAT WE ANALYZE CAREFULLY AND FULLY WHAT
IS INVOLVED. I TRUST THAT YOU WILL USE YOUR INFLUENCE
TO BRING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AROUND TO A MORE REALISTIC
APPROACH. IF YOU SUCCEED, YOU CAN COUNT ON US TO WORK
BEHIND THE SCENES WITH THE OTHER PARTIES.

-- I LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU. WARMEST REGARDS,
HENRY A. KISSINGER.

KISSINGER
UNQUOTE ROBINSON.

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